JUL 6 1944

S#22
1158
pam.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OXFORD

By

HENRY SMITH LEIPER

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR LIFE AND WORK
297 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

LIBRARY OF THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY NEW YORK
NO LONGER THE PROPERTY OF THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, N. Y.

Br
280.242
L534h

LIBRARY OF THE
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the pictures and parts of the text the author is indebted to several friends and colleagues, particularly to Dr. William B. Lipphard, editor of the magazine "Missions," from whose excellent summary of the Oxford proceedings several passages are adapted.

Prices of this Booklet
Single Copy — 10c
10 Copies or More — 5c each

Printed in U. S. A.

br
280-242
L534h

"Oxford Speaking—"

"HELLO America! Hello America!" said Dr. Walter Van Kirk, broadcasting from Oxford, England, on the night of July 16th, 1937, as the great world conference on Church, State and Society swung into its fourth day with nearly a thousand delegates, associates, and visitors from forty-five nations and about one hundred denominations. "It's a great sight," he continued. "I've been to all sorts of conventions and conferences but this one tops them all. There's drama here — the drama of a Church stacking itself up against a world of war and preparations for war, economic injustice, racial persecution, and national bigotry. What we've got is the story of David and the Giant all over again! The part of David in this Oxford drama is being taken by the one thousand delegates and the Giant is the great big world on the outside, with its armies and battalions, its entrenched greed and its political arrogance in high places. And the sword in the hands of the delegates is not a sword of steel but the sword of Christian unity. I envy the church historian of the future when he picks up his pen to tell the story of this Conference."

Then Dr. Van Kirk added, "The other day in one of the streets of Oxford I looked down upon a cross embedded in the stones beneath my feet. It marked the spot where Latimer was burned to death in 1555 because he would not renounce his faith. As the flames licked his body, the old preacher cried out: 'We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out.' I feel that the same thing may truly be said, in a very different way, about this great World Conference of Christians: there has been lighted in Oxford still another candle, the light of which will shine upon the Church and the world alike for many a long year to come."

Yet Another Beacon Lighted

Among the streets of Oxford, where the twenty-eight colleges compose its famed University, the best known is the "High." It is illumined by few high lights in the literal sense! In a symbolic sense it has had many high lights lit from time to time along its winding way and seen afar across the centuries. Movements of significance in the life of the world have arisen there in almost every century. But in the summer of 1937 the University itself — wedded though it be to precedent—did something unprecedented. It acted as host to a world conference of churches called to discuss the effect upon all Christians of a rapidly spreading tendency to put the modern totalitarian state in the place of God, and to deny every essential liberty to the individual conscience. Such pressing problems lay behind the somewhat stolid title of the council — "Church, Community and State" — "Community" in this connection meaning pretty much what Americans mean by the "social order."

And the conference was much more than a conference usually is. It came as the culmination of the first stage in a process of marshalling the spiritual and organizational forces of Christ to repent of and repair their internal divisions, as well as to resist vigorously the creeping paralysis which has already resulted in the death of the Church over great areas of the world. A great company of church men and women from every corner of the earth — including statesmen, lawyers, college presidents, scientists, bankers, industrialists, and government officials — concentrated their thinking and discussion upon problems in whose solution lies the fate of human freedom and brotherhood and peace.

It was a time of drama, of suspense, of fearless facing of facts. Even at the hour when the delegates of Japan and China met on the High Street, their countrymen on the other side of the world were meeting in deadly strife. As the speakers mounted the rostrum in the famous "Sheldonian" on the first night, they carried with them the knowledge that their German brethren instead of being in Oxford were, some of them, in Nazi prisons. More than one delegate from a totalitarian state trembled to think what might happen if his name became publicly associated with criticisms of political systems which now seek to displace the sanctities of the Christian faith with new myths of emperor worship or messianic leadership.

Twice daily the delegates, displaying by their costumes an indescribably colorful variety, forgot all their differences as they united their hearts and minds and voices in St. Mary's Church. There for five hundred years church services had been going on before Columbus discovered America. For half a millenium its storied aisles had echoed to the passing feet of worshippers who knew nothing of a divided Church. That fact helped to make it clear that the one hundred scattered parts of the Church in the modern world here represented were after all only parts of a single whole. They were being drawn once more into a sense of solidarity — undefined and indefinable, perhaps, but vital and real — as they faced a world increasingly hostile to the mind and purpose of the great Head of the Church.

These churchmen knew that they were facing a crisis. In Russia, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Japan, Spain, Turkey, and certain

---

The problem of more union among the churches of Christendom is not one of legislating ourselves together but rather that of the slow process of growing together.—**T. S. Eliot,** London.

LIBRARY
World Council of Churches
150, route de Ferney, GENEVA

South American republics, they had been watching the State gradually monopolizing areas of life hitherto occupied without hindrance by the Church. They knew it was the old question of Caesar versus Christ; they saw the Caesars of this modern world "stalking up and down the face of the earth claiming for themselves the right to control the mind and body and soul of every last man, woman, and child in their nations."

Four hundred of those at Oxford were delegates: one hundred selected by the Universal Christian Council for special competence; three hundred designated by over one hundred denominations throughout the world — representing every main division of Christendom excepting the Roman Catholic communion. There were also one hundred specially selected youth associates and three hundred invited general associate members of the conference.

It was the most representative and most carefully prepared-for church council of modern times. It succeeded in defining the place and function of the Christian Church in the modern world. It made a plan for the united work of the churches in the future. As nearly as anything can be, it was universal. All it said and did represented the united thought and action of more of the Christian Church than has thought or acted together for half a millenium.

Delegates converging on the Town Hall

The Holy Catholic Church Invisible but Indivisible!

Oxford thus was catholic in the sense which all Christians have in mind when they repeat the Apostle's Creed and say, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church." It was universal, all inclusive, inter-racial, supra-national, save for the regretted absence of the great Church of Rome which had not found it possible to cooperate officially (although unofficially manifesting deep interest and friendliness because recognizing that the issues at Oxford were issues that concerned all Christians without respect to their communion).

Perhaps it would be better to say, as many of the speakers and delegates did, that Oxford was **ecumenical.** That old Greek word was resurrected and put back into circulation. The Greeks meant by it something which no other word exactly signifies — that is, the whole household of faith embracing all races, all nations, all branches of the Church itself. The ecumenical aspect of Oxford was a natural and healthy response to the terrific forces that are tearing human civilization to pieces. It was a drawing together of the world in confidence and fellowship when suspicion and hate and fear are tearing it apart. The delegates spoke and thought and worshipped—even as they acted—not in the interest of any one part of the Church but for the sake of the whole.

Men and women went to Oxford thinking of **the churches.** They came away talking and thinking about **The Church:** invisible, spiritual, eternal, more real than the broken ranks of those who call themselves members of the body of Christ, forgetting when they use the word that there can be only one family of one Lord, however many earthly homes that family may inhabit.

Leadership at Oxford

The range and quality of the leadership which the Oxford Conference brought together is exemplified in the personnel of the six Chairmen. Presiding in rotation were the Archbishop of Canterbury (Anglican), Archbishop Germanos (Eastern Orthodox), Archbishop Eidem (Swedish Lutheran), Pastor Marc Boegner (Reformed of France), Professor William Adams Brown of the U.S.A., and Bishop Azariah of Dornakal, India.

Put the life story of each of these chairman alongside of the others — and what a modern "Plutarch's Lives" one would possess! Look just at the last mentioned — Bishop V. S. Azariah. You see ascending the platform of Oxford's beautiful Town Hall a man who was born among India's sixty million outcastes, himself an "untouchable." Now he stands in quiet dignity, clad in purple, presiding over a great assembly of his Christian brethren from all the world, himself ranking with the Archbishop of Canterbury, as one of these six presiding officials of the conference. Can you

---

The Church must be rescued from the reproach of multitudes in all lands for whom it has become an effete institution irrelevant to the real problems of life.—**J. H. Oldham,** London.

think of a greater demonstration of the transforming power of Christ—or of the inclusiveness of Christian fellowship. "In Christ no East or West, in Him no North or South"—at Oxford!

Youth

Participation of youth delegates and leaders of youth from the various lands and the many communions was made possible at Oxford through the selection not only of youth delegates in the regular list of denominational representatives but likewise through the one hundred youth associates.

These future leaders of the churches sat upon the platform at the full sessions. They had a series of meetings of their own and worked out a plan for a world conference of their own to follow up the work of their seniors. This is to be held from July 25 to August 3, 1939, at Amsterdam, Holland. It will "confront youth with the purposes of Jesus Christ and call them to witness the reality of the Christian Community as the God-given supranational body to which has been entrusted the message of the victory of Jesus Christ over the world's spiritual, political, and social confusion."

R. H. Edwin Espy, leader of the Youth Group

The Issues at Oxford

Most of the creative work of the Conference was done in Sections. These dealt with (1) Church and Community, under the chairmanship of Sir Walter Moberly; (2) Church and State, under the chairmanship of Dr. Max Huber of Holland; (3) The Church and Economics, under the chairmanship of Dean John P. R. Maud of Oxford; (4) Church, Community, and State with reference to Education, under the leadership of President Henry Sloane Coffin; (5) The Church and the World of Nations, under the chairmanship of President John A. Mackay, with a special subsection on War, headed by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft.

Alongside the work of the Sections, there were conferences of the associates dealing in a more popular way with the same issues.

The quality of the thinking done in the Sections may be indicated by reference to a single group, that on the Church and the World of Nations. Included in this circle of about sixty persons were clerical leaders like the Archbishop of York and Dr. William P. Merrill; distinguished men of affairs like Viscount Cecil, the Marquis of Lothian, John Foster Dulles of New York, and J. V. Wilson, of the Secretariat of the League of Nations; scholars like Sir Alfred Zimmern and Professor C. E. Raven. After the Sections had done their intensive work and prepared preliminary drafts of their findings, these were debated in plenary sessions under the masterful guidance of Dr. John R. Mott, the Chairman of the Business Committee. Skillful interpreters in three languages, English, French, and German, made it possible for all the delegates to participate in their own tongues.

No attempt was made to give an artificial impression of agreement on points on which real difference appeared. Where it was impossible to reconcile divergent views—as, for example, in the difficult question of "pacifism"—the contrasted positions were clearly recorded.

In brief limits of space it is impossible to give any adequate summary either of the discussion or of the addresses to which the plenary sessions listened. The full record will be found in the volume, "The Oxford Conference: Official Reports." The Conference itself and also the Edinburgh Conference which followed it are described in the book, "World Chaos or World Christianity" by the author of this pamphlet. Some indication of the general conclusions is given in the Message of the Conference, printed on pages 13 and 14.

The Atmosphere of Worship

The most unforgettable part of the Oxford program will probably prove to be the services of worship each morning and evening in the historic St. Mary's Church.

The reality of worship was experienced in these hours in an exceptional degree. This was due in part to the sense of a common fellowship in Christ shared by men and women of diverse backgrounds; in part to the effective way in which worship was related to the daily work of the Conference. In periods

---

The Church is doing too much **for** young people and too little **with** them. Church direction is too much in the control of "elder statesmen."—**Professor Georgia Harkness,** Mt. Holyoke, Mass.

of silent prayer and guided meditation the great issues which concerned the Conference were lifted into the light of God's eternal purpose in a way which brought those who wrestled with them into touch with more than human resources. A service of worship of a different character was that conducted according to the moving liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church, assisted by the choir of the Russian Seminary in Paris.

Entrance to St. Mary's Church

On the closing Sunday at Oxford there was a memorable service of Holy Communion in St. Mary's, conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to which all baptized Christians were invited. The presence of so many Christians, separated by race, language and nationality but all united in their devotion to one Lord and all seeking the unity of His Church, made the occasion one of deep spiritual significance.

A World Council of Churches

The greatest immediate effects of the Oxford Conference were of two kinds: first, the clarification of Christian thinking on the urgent problems presented by the state of the world and of the Church; second, the unparalleled stimulus to spiritual unity. But in addition to this there was a definitely tangible outcome which may prove to be epoch-making. This was the proposal, now submitted to the churches, to form a single ecumenical movement under the direction of a World Council of Churches, embracing all of non-Roman Christianity. If the plan is consummated, as it seems certain to be in due time, it will mark a new stage in Christian history, for there will then come into being a world-wide council directly representing the great bodies of non-Roman Christianity and continuously functioning in cooperative tasks in their behalf.

The plan is the outgrowth of a "Committee of Thirty-Five," which had been jointly created by "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" a year ago to study the future of the ecumenical movement. The group met at Westfield College, London, July 8-10, a company of trusted Christian representatives from America, Great Britain, and the Continent of Europe, including Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, "Free" Churchmen, and Eastern Orthodox (Greek Catholic). American members were Bishop James C. Baker, President Albert W. Beaven, Principal Walter T. Brown (Canada), Professor William Adams Brown, Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, Dr. Fred F. Goodsell, Dr. John R. Mott, Dr. Lewis S. Mudge, Rt. Rev. G. Ashton Oldham and Rt. Rev. Edward L. Parsons. The Archbishop of York (Dr. Temple) was Chairman.

The prophetic plan, so far-reaching in its possibilities, emerged out of three days of study and prayer, in which all the participants felt that they had experienced the guidance of the Holy Spirit in an unusual degree. This impression has been confirmed by the virtually unanimous approval given to the general substance of the proposal by both the Oxford and the Edinburgh conferences.

The World Council of Churches would function through a General Assembly of approximately 200 representatives appointed directly by the cooperating churches and meeting every five years. There would also be a central committee, of approximately sixty members, likewise representative of the churches, meeting annually as the executive of the General Assembly. The Council would have "no power to legislate for the churches or to commit them to action without their consent." Its functions, as provisionally defined, would include the following:

"To carry on the work of the Faith and Order and the Life and Work movements;

"To make it easier for the churches to act together;

"To promote cooperation in study;

"To further the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the churches;

"To call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion requires."

The Church has denied the universality of Christianity by its divisions over doctrine, race, and nationality. It has erected the barriers that separate Christianity from Christ.—**T. Z. Koo,** Shanghai, China.

There would be two special commissions, one for the further study of Faith and Order subjects, the other for the study of Life and Work subjects.

In endorsing the plan in principle, the Oxford Conference appointed seven persons, creating, with Edinburgh's seven chosen later, "A Constituent Committee of Fourteen," which was charged with the responsibility of completing the details, submitting the proposal to the churches and, when it has been approved by the churches, convening the World Council.

The "Committee of Fourteen" met in London on August 19 and organized with the Archbishop of York as chairman and Canon Hodgson and Dr. Cavert as secretaries. It arranged to send a letter of invitation to all the churches which have participated in either the Faith and Order or the Life and Work movements. A preliminary conference is to be convened in May, 1938, in Holland for the purpose of drafting the constitution for the World Council and making such provision as is necessary for the maintenance of "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" in the interim before the World Council has received official authorization from the churches and the first General Assembly has been convened.

The permanent results of the collective thinking done at Oxford will be longest felt through the effect of the decisions reached regarding Christian viewpoints. These decisions are embodied in the reports of the five Sections. Summaries of them are given in the following pages in the order of the reports rather than in the order in which they happened to come before the Conference sessions for acceptance and transmission to the churches.

The Church and the Community

There was discussion of this report by more than a score of delegates when it was presented to the Conference. There was something of a mystery attached to the report. The English version included the words "anti-Semitism" and the quotation from St. Paul, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek." In the German translation both references were missing! Nobody could explain how that happened. The chairman, Sir Walter Moberly, assured all present, however, that it was purely an inadvertence, an unintentional oversight by the translator.

Of more striking definiteness than the report itself was the appended "supplemental document" which included this positive declaration:

Every kind of national egotism, where the love of one's own nation leads to the suppression of other nationalities or minorities, is sin and rebellion against God. The deification of one's own people is a sin against God.

Three major problems were stressed as demanding the special attention of the Church:

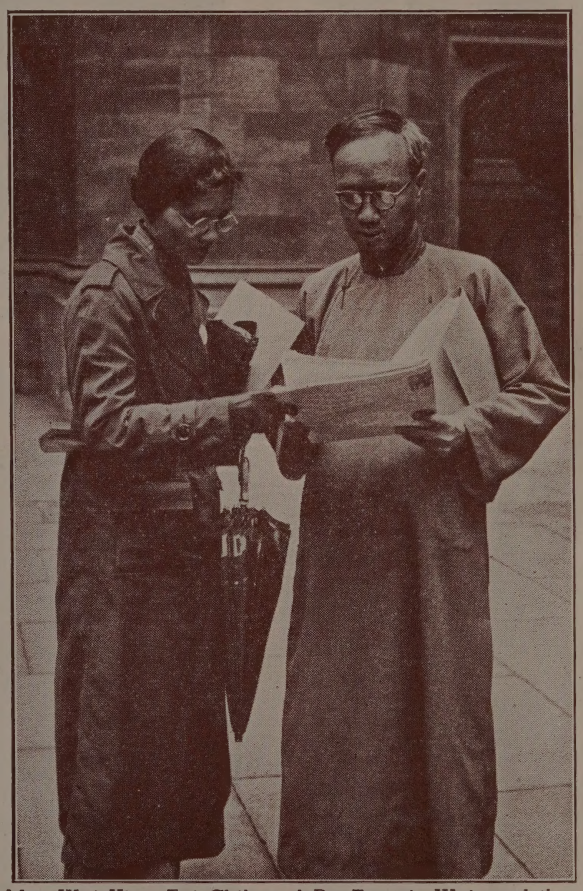
1. National egotism which finds in one's own nation a final revelation of God must be repudiated and irreconcilably opposed by the Christian conscience.

2. The Church must preach the positive doctrine that the existence of different races is full of possibilities for the enrichment of human life and in particular must demonstrate the true community of people of all races within its own life.

3. The Church must re-establish intimate contact with the common life of men, by participation of Christians in national and local government, in social life, and in concern for the outcast, the underprivileged and the persecuted.

The Church and the State

The report on "Church and State," in the preparation of which great difficulty had been



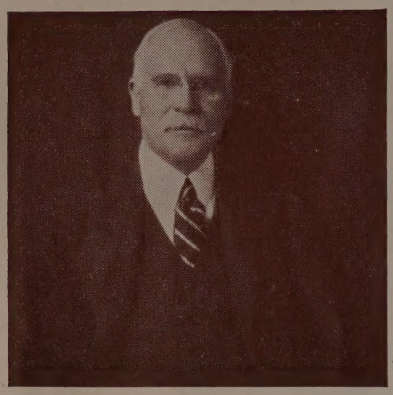
Mrs. Wai King Tai Chik and Dr. Francis Wei read the news from home

expected, proved to be a remarkably strong statement. It also prompted numerous speeches, again in three languages, and most-

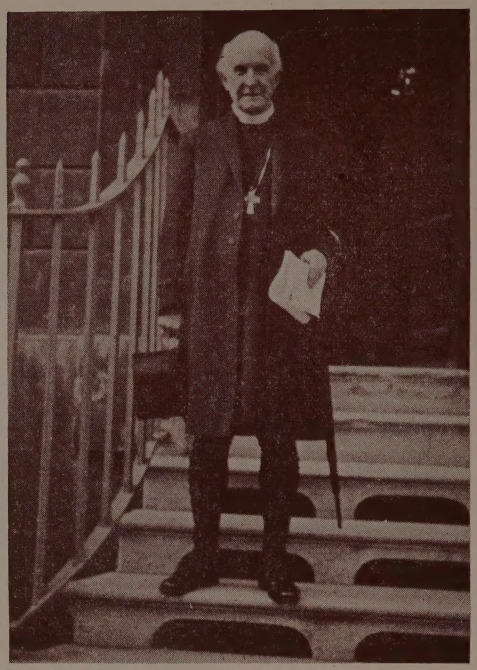
---

The primary duty of the Church is to **be** the Christian community.—**Visser 't Hooft,** Geneva, Switzerland.

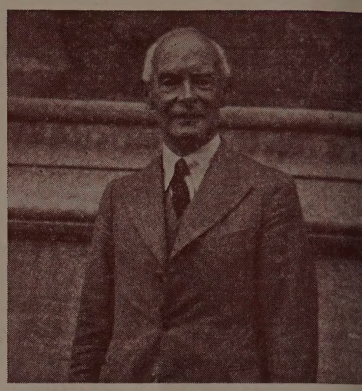
PERSONALITIES



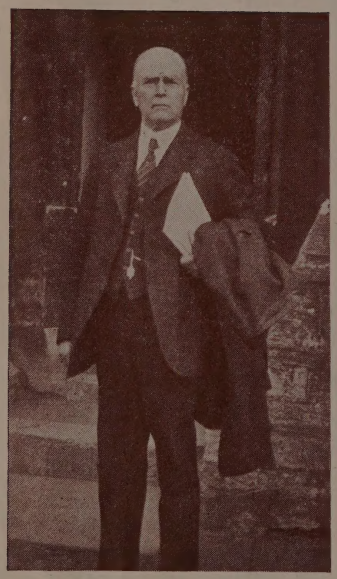
Dr. William Adams Brown, American President of the Universal Christian Council, who presided at several of the sessions



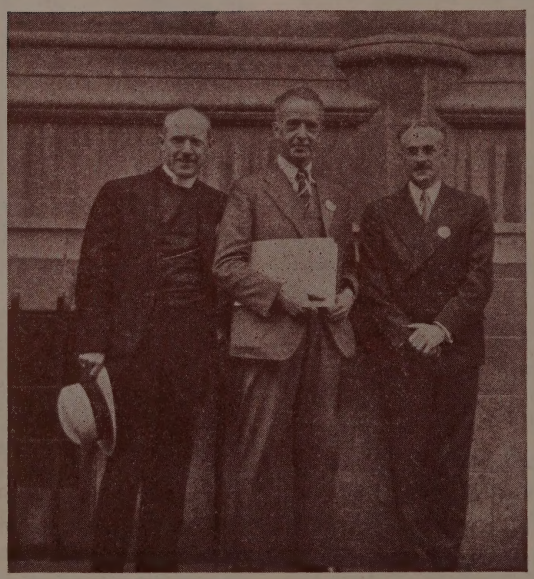
His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who gave the opening address and whose leadership throughout was an inspiration to all



Dr. J. H. Oldham, of London, Researc Chairman, in charge of the prepar tory work and the program



Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the Business Committee

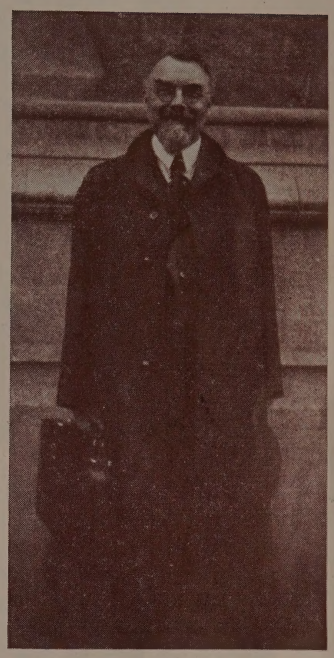


Two Executive Secretaries and a Speaker: Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, M. Henry L. Henriod, and Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert

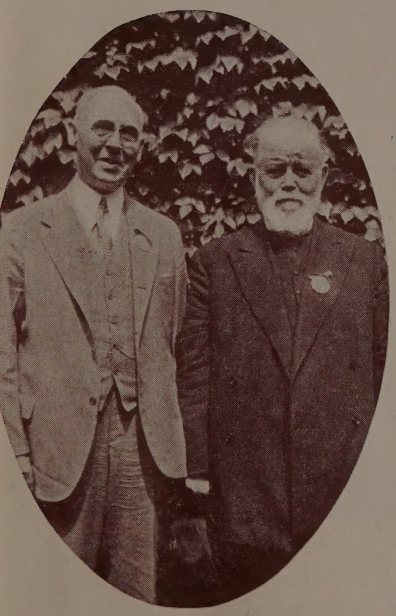
Dr. A. Koechlin of Geneva, official interpreter, whose brilliant translations in three languages won the admiration of all

AT OXFORD

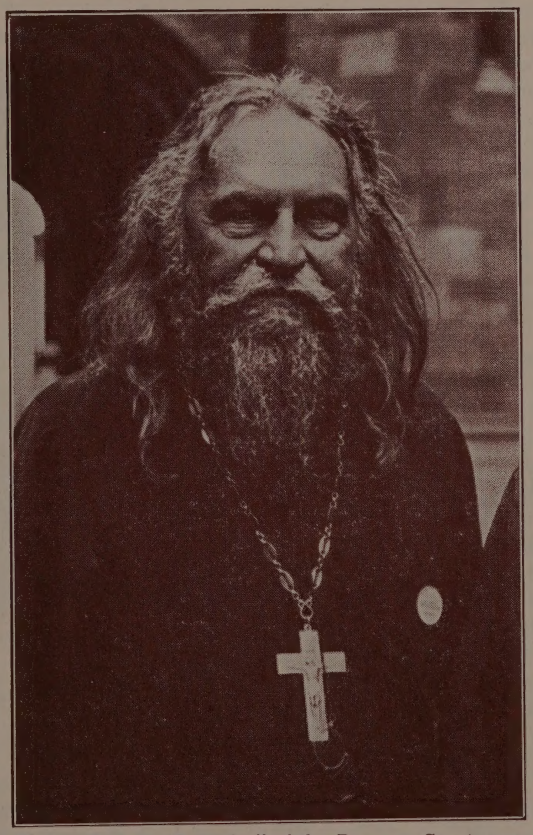
Three Leaders of Younger Churches: Timothy Tingfang Lew of China; Bishop V. S. Azariah of South India; Bishop Sasaki of Japan



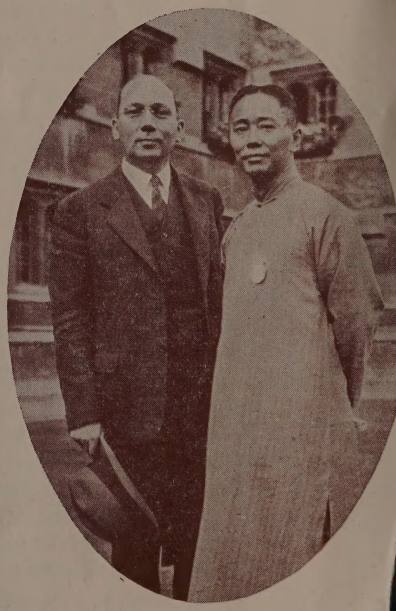
Dr. Adolf Keller, of Geneva, Honorary Lecturer of the Council



President James H. Franklin of Crozer Theological Seminary and Archbishop Germanos of Thyrateira, one of the presidents of the council



Father Sergius Bulgakoff of the Russian Seminary in Paris. Formerly a Marxist professor of economics in Moscow, exiled by old Russia for his democracy and exiled by new Russia for his Christianity



Dr. E. A. Fridell, of Berkeley, California, and Dr. T. Z. Koo, of China who made one of the outstanding addresses

ly by delegates from continental Europe, although British and American spokesmen were not lacking in numbers or eloquence.

In discussing the paragraphs on freedom of the Church, the Bishop of Southwark was greeted with cheers when he vigorously appealed for full liberty in the whole sphere of religion, for Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists as well as followers of pagan faiths. Moveover he urged churches to make a solemn declaration never again to resort to persecution of other churches and to refrain from securing political privileges which would be a disadvantage to other churches.

So pleased with this speech was President J. R. Sampey of the Southern Baptist Convention, that he rushed to the platform and with characteristic southern fervor invited the Bishop to come to Richmond next May to address the Southern Baptist Convention on religious liberty!

The report was bold and frank in stating it to be the duty of the Church "to criticize the State so far as it departs form the standards of justice set forth in the Word of God, **which may even involve the duty of disobedience to the State's command."** But the duty of the Church to the State does not stop with criticism. Five other particulars are given: "the responsibility of praying for the State, its people and its government; that of loyalty and obedience to the State, disobedience becoming a duty only if obedience would be clearly contrary to the command of God; that of cooperation with the State in promoting the welfare of the citizens, and of lending moral support to the State when it upholds the standards of justice set forth in the Word of God; that of holding before men in all their legislation and administration those principles which make for the upholding of the dignity of man who is made in the image of God; and that of permeating the public life with the spirit of Christ and of training men and women who as Christians can contribute to that end." In claiming liberty for the Church the report declared strongly against majority or established churches in a country by saying that "where there are majority and minority churches, membership in a minority church should not be a reason for denying civil equality." The concluding section on freedom lists the following conditions as essential to the Church's fulfillment of its duties:

1. Freedom to determine its own faith and creed.
2. Freedom of worship, preaching and teaching
3. Freedom to determine the nature of its own government and the qualifications of its ministers and members.
4. Freedom to educate its ministers and to give religious instruction to its youth.
5. Freedom of Christian service and missionary activity.
6. Freedom to cooperate with other churches.
7. Freedom for all citizens to make possible the accomplishments of these ends.

Thus historic principles which Christians have maintained throughout the centuries were unequivocally endorsed by this ecumenical conference!

Once more Dr. John R. Mott as presiding officer put the question to a vote and this report was also approved.

The Church and the Economic Order

Then came the report on "The Church in relation to the Economic Order." In general it criticized the existing economic order by listing the following shortcomings:

1. Obstacles to Christian fellowship by the existence of classes on an economic basis.
2. Inequalities of opportunity in education, health, leisure, and environment, often aggravated by race discrimination.
3. Irresponsible power possessed by individuals.
4. Material possessions made the criterion of success.
5. Denial of the Christian's call to do the will of God in his daily work implied in enforced unemployment and in some actual forms of development.
6. Powerlessness of the investor and the consumer to control the results of their economic behaviour.
7. The threat of war involved in the economic rivalry of competing nations.

The French Delegation, headed by Dr. Marc Boegner (center)

It is because of such injustices that communism and other movements of an anti-religious character have arisen. The Church must seek to cure such conditions and not content itself with denouncing other attempts which it disapproves. It must "examine these

---

It is human to demand justice; it is Christian to give it; it is human to keep what one has; it is Christian to share it.—**Rev. Edward W. Cross,** Springfield, Mass.

movements in a spirit of honesty and unflinching criticism."

The report on the Church and the Economic Order constitutes a call to the churches to take a responsible and leading part in the economic life of the world. It is based upon the conception of the Church as "a worshipping community which must relate its acts of repentance and dedication to the economic order in which its members live." Those who prepared the report for submission to the Conference were not merely theorists. Some of the most distinguished men in modern economic life took part, among them Sir Josiah Stamp, of Great Britain, the Minister of Labor of Holland, Dr. Slotemaker de Bruine; Mr. Charles P. Taft, II, Mr. James M. Speers, and Mr. Harry B. Earhart of the United States. Eminent professors of economics like Dr. John P. R. Maud of University College, Oxford, Prof. R. H. Tawney, and Father Sergius Boulgakoff, former professor at the University of Moscow, now in exile in Paris, assisted in the formulation of the decisions.

Starting with the premise that all of human life is subject to the will of Christ, the responsibility of the churches is set forth as having "to do everything within their power to create conditions which will provide all persons with those opportunities necessary for their full development as persons.

"Christians must acknowledge that their blindness to the challenging features of the situation are, to a great extent, responsible for the gap between the Church and radical movements which aim at social justice. The Church has failed in her duty as a Church in relation to that challenge, through a one-sided interpretation of the gospel, which has given to Christians an excuse for complacency through too close an alliance with the more privileged sections of each national community, through disunion, through preoccupation with many lesser tasks, through the failure on the part of her members to bear witness in their own economic activities to their Christian faith.

"Christians must recognize this failure as well as the fact that faithlessness on her part largely is responsible for the alienation from the Christian gospel of large masses of people."

The report urged the churches to teach in stronger form the Christian principles of economic intercourse and exhorted church members to use true Christian conduct in all their daily affairs.

"In the next decade," the report said, "those who are responsible for guiding the

Prof. Alexander C. Zabriskie of Alexandria, Va., and Dr. William Temple, Archbishop of York

life of the Church must seek by means of these forms of teaching to bring under moral control the attitudes of their members in economic relationships, just as they have always sought to bring under moral control the attitudes of their members in direct personal relationships. This task will involve far more than preaching. It must be an integral part of the whole life atmosphere of the Church."

The economic task of the Church must include clarifying the relation of the gospel to economic activities and the chief points in the economic world where the purpose of God is challenged, as well as a recognition by the Church of its share of responsibility for these evils in economic life and a constant call to remedial Christian action within the economic order.

The teaching by which the Church can help the Christian to make particular decisions must be supplemented by the example which the Church can set in its own business practices so as to reveal firm ground for hope of a truly just order.

The details of this long and full report furnish much challenging material to churches everywhere. At Oxford it prompted a long succession of speeches. Spokesmen ranged all the way from Anglican and Eastern Orthodox bishops to American business men. Only one objection was raised. An Anglican Archdeacon vigorously criticized the report for having in it no direct condemnation of Russian communism. To this an American replied by declaring that God might be speaking to the Church through the communist movement even

---

The primary concern of the Church is not with the alteration of institutions and orders and systems but with the changing of persons.—**Professor Emil Brunner,** Zurich, Switzerland.

as He had spoken to Israel through Babylon. After all who wanted to speak had stated their views, the Conference formally voted to receive the report and to commend it to the churches.

The Church and Education

This report denounced race prejudice and all discrimination in educational opportunities and facilities because of "race or social status. Truth is supreme and there must be freedom to seek and teach it."

Moreover, the Church must protest in lands where governments attempt to control all agencies which educate or influence belief and behaviour or try to abridge the Church's right to educate her children in the Christian faith. On the other hand the Church must recognize and sympathize with governments in their efforts to restore and maintain unity in this time of social and national disintegration, and must admit education as a powerful process in achieving such aims. Yet any education which stimulates individualism or selfish nationalism must be replaced by an education which proclaims Christ as Lord and affirms the God-given basis of social solidarity, manifested by the relationships of the family and the community.

Other features of this, by far the longest of the five reports, stressed the need of education in mission lands, proper education for ministers, parents, school teachers, and all others who deal with youth in these times when youth is so enthusiastically responding to the appeals by political leaders of many nations. The report deplored the divisions of the Church as a serious obstacle to unity in education in that the State hesitates to "involve public education in sectarian strife" and thus naturally favors "secularist systems of education."

The Church, the Nations, and War

Unprecedented interest was manifested in the next report on "The Church and the World of Nations," and particularly on the Church and war. Although two full sessions were assigned to it, more than forty delegates, who had sent up cards signifying to Dr. Mott their desire to speak, could not be allotted time. This report stirred more deep feeling than any of the others. Naturally when all of Europe lives in the shadow of war, with London and Oxford within an hour's flight of continental bombing airplanes, the war problem was uppermost in the minds of all. Even the Americans saw it a little more realistically.

The report was frank in its admission of different and at present incompatible views among Christians concerning war. **It left these differences unresolved.** As a general statement, however, it was strong and uncompromising. The fact that the Conference could agree on the following declaration is exceedingly significant:

Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, President of the Federal Council, Canon Anson Phelps Stokes, of Washington, D. C., and Dr. Max Huber, Chairman of Section II, leaving the Town Hall.

> Wars, the occasions of war, and all situations which conceal the fact of conflict under the guise of outward peace, are incidents in a world to which the Church is charged to proclaim the gospel of redemption. War involves compulsory enmity, diabolical outrage against human personality, and a wanton distortion of the truth. War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in this world and a defiance of the righteousness of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. **No justification of war must be allowed to conceal or minimize this fact.**

Having admitted this principle, the report then set forth the three views on war as held by members of the Conference:

> 1. War is always sin and the Church will become a creative, regenerative, and reconciling instrument for the healing of the nations only as it renounces war absolutely.
>
> 2. Christians should participate only in such wars as are justifiable on the basis of international law, or wars waged to vindicate what they believe to be an essential Christian principle, to defend victims of wanton aggression, or to secure freedom for the oppressed.
>
> 3. Christians have a duty to obey the political authority as far as possible in its efforts to maintain its existence against aggression. They believe that the State is the agent divinely appointed to preserve a nation. Normally therefore a Christian must take up arms for his country, the only exception being when he is absolutely certain that his country is fighting for a wrong cause.

Here follows the sentence which sadly admits the perplexity and the complexity which overwhelm this crucial world issue:

War always means dismembering of the Body of Christ. It bids me treat as an enemy and even kill the man whom Christ bids me love as a member of His family. That is something which no earthly power ought to be able to do.—**Samuel McCrea Cavert,** New York.

We do not affirm that any one of these positions can be held to represent the only possible Christian attitude. The Church must insist that the perplexity itself is a sign of the sin in which its members are implicated. **It cannot rest in permanent acquiescence in the continuance of these differences.**

The report endorsed the League of Nations as "the most considerable effort yet made in the world's history to enable governments to consult, plan and act together," although it recognized its weaknesses and failures. Numerous practical suggestions in the report deserve the careful attention of every church. They include removal of racial barriers, mutual church aid, religious freedom, ecumenical education and education for peace and general disarmament.

Message from the Oxford Conference to the Christian Churches

As an attempt to state in concise form the essence of the Oxford findings, the following message was accepted by the Conference after careful consideration:

THE delegates to the World Conference on Church, Community, and State, assembled at Oxford, England, from July 12 to 26, 1937, send at the close of their deliberation the following message to the Churches of Christ throughout the world:

In the name of Christ, greetings.

We meet at a time when mankind is oppressed with perplexity and fear. Men are burdened with evils almost insupportable and with problems apparently insoluble. Even in countries which are at peace unemployment and malnutrition sap men's strength of body, mind, and spirit. In other countries war does its "devil's work," and threatens to overwhelm us all in its limitless catastrophe.

Yet we do not take up our task as bewildered citizens of our several nations, asking if anywhere there is a clue to our problems; we take it up as Christians, to whom is committed "the word of reconciliation," that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

The first duty of the Church and its greatest service to the world is that it be in very deed the Church—confessing the true faith, committed to the fulfillment of the will of Christ, its only Lord, and united in Him in a fellowship of love and service.

We do not call the world to be like ourselves, for we are already too like the world. Only as we ourselves repent, both as individuals and as corporate bodies, can the Church call men to repentance. The call to ourselves and to the world is to Christ.

Our Unity of Spirit

Despite our faithfulness God has done great things through His Church. One of the greatest is this —that, notwithstanding the tragedy of our divisions and our inability in many important matters to speak with a united voice, there exists an actual world-fellowship. Our unity in Christ is not a theme for aspiration; it is an experienced fact. We can speak of it with boldness because our Conference is an illustration of it. We are drawn from many nations and from many different communions, from churches with centuries of history behind them and from the younger churches whose story covers but a few decades; but we are one in Christ.

The unity of this fellowship is not built up from its constituent parts, like a federation of different states. It consists in the sovereignty and redeeming acts of its one Lord. The source of unity is not the consenting movement of men's wills; it is Jesus Christ whose one life flows through the Body and subdues the many wills to His.

Race and Nation

The Christian sees distinctions of race as part of God's purpose to enrich mankind with a diversity of gifts. Against racial pride or race antagonism the Church must set its face implacably as rebellion against God. Especially in its own life and worship, there can be no place for barriers because of race or color. Similarly the Christian accepts national communities as part of God's purpose to enrich and diversify human life. Every man is called of God to serve his fellows in the community to which he belongs. But national egotism tending to the suppression of other nationalities or of minorities is, no less than individual egotism, a sin against the Creator of all peoples and races. The deification of nation, race or class, or of political or cultural ideals, is idolatry, and can only lead to increasing division and disaster.

On every side we see men seeking for a life of fellowship in which they experience their dependence on one another. But because community is sought on a wrong basis, the intensity of the search for it issues in conflict and disintegration. In such a world the Church is called to be in its own life that fellowship which binds men together in their common dependence on God and overleaps all barriers of social status, race or nationality.

War and Peace

In consonance with its nature as true community, the Church will call the nations to order their lives as members of the one family of God. The Universal Church surveying the nations of the world, in every one of which it is now planted and rooted, must pronounce a condemnation of war unqualified and unrestricted. War can occur only as a fruit and manifestation of sin. This truth is unaffected by any question what may be the duty of a nation which has to choose between entry upon war and a course which it believes to be a betrayal of right, or what may be the duty of a Christian citizen whose country is involved in war. The condemnation of war stands, and also the obligation to seek the way of freeing mankind from its physical, moral, and spiritual ravages. If war breaks out, then pre-eminently the Church must manifestly be the Church, still united as the one Body of Christ, though the nations wherein it is planted fight each other, consciously offering the same prayers that God's Name may be hallowed, His Kingdom come, and His Will be done in both, or all, the warring nations. This fellowship of prayer must at all costs remain unbroken. The Church must also hold together in one spiritual fellowship those of its members who take different views concerning their duty as Christian citizens in time of war.

To condemn war is not enough, for many situations conceal the fact of conflict under the guise of outward peace. Christians must do all in their power to promote among the nations justice and peaceful cooperation, and the means of peaceful adjustment to altering conditions. Especially should Christians in more fortunate countries press the demand for justice on behalf of the less fortunate. The insistence upon justice must express itself in a demand for such

---

Wherever the State claims to give a theology to its people, or to set a principle of education, or tries to organize a conscience or impose a myth upon the people, there you will find the ultimate menace to the Christian Church.—**Adolf Keller,** Geneva, Switzerland.

mitigation of the sovereignty of national states as is involved in the abandonment by each of the claim to be judge in its own cause.

Church and State

We recognize the State as being in its own sphere the highest authority. It has the God-given aim in that sphere to uphold law and order and to minister to the life of its people. But as all authority is from God, the State stands under His judgment. God is Himself the source of justice, of which the State is not lord but servant. The Christian can acknowledge no ultimate authority but God; his loyalty to the State is part of his loyalty to God and must never usurp the place of that primary and only absolute loyalty.

The Church has duties laid upon it by God, which at all cost it must perform, among which the chief is to proclaim the Word of God and to make disciples, and to order its own life in the power of the Spirit dwelling in it. Because this is its duty it must do it, whether or not the State consents; and the State on its side should recognize the duty and assure full liberty for its performance. The Church can claim such liberty for itself only as it is also concerned for the rights and liberties of others.

Church and Economics

In the economic sphere the first duty of the Church is to insist that economic activities, like every other department of human life, stand under the judgment of Christ. The existence of economic classes presents a barrier to human fellowship which cannot be tolerated by the Christian conscience. Indefensible inequalities of opportunity in regard to education, leisure, and health continue to prevail. The ordering of economic life has tended to enhance acquisitiveness and to set up a false standard of economic and social success. The only forms of employment open to many men and women, or the fact that none is open, prevent them from finding a sense of Christian vocation in their daily life.

We are witnessing new movements which have arisen in reaction to these evils but which combine with their struggle for social justice the repudiation of all religious faith. Aware of the reality of sin, the Church knows that no change in the outward ordering of life can of itself eradicate social evil. The Church therefore cannot surrender to the utopian expectations of these movements, and their godlessness it must unequivocally reject; but in doing so it must recognize that Christians in their blindness to the challenging evils of the economic order have been partly responsible for the anti-religious character of these movements.

Christians have a double duty—both to bear witness to their faith within the existing economic order and also to test all economic institutions in the light of their understanding of God's will. The forces of evil against which Christians have to contend not only are found in the hearts of men as individuals, but have entered into and infected the structure of society and there also must be combatted. The responsibility of the Church is to insist on the true relationship of spiritual and economic goods. Man cannot live without bread, and man cannot live by bread alone. Our human wealth consists in fellowship with God and in Him with our brethren. To this fellowship the whole economic order must be made subservient.

The questions which have mainly engaged the attention of the Conference are questions that can be effectively dealt with, in practice, only by the laity. Those who are responsible for the daily conduct of industry, administration, and public life must discover for themselves what is the right decision in an endless variety of concrete situations. If they are to receive the help they need in making responsible Christian decisions new types of ministry will have to be developed by the Church.

Youth and Education

The fulfillment of the tasks to which the Church is called today lies largely in the hands of youth. Many loud voices are calling on young people to give themselves to political and social ideals, and it is often hard for them to hear the voice of Jesus Christ who calls them to be servants of the eternal Kingdom. Yet many of the younger generation, often in spite of ridicule and sometimes of persecution, are turning to Him, and individually as well as in Christian youth movements devote themselves to the renewal of the life of the churches and to make known the Good News of Christ by word and action. We rejoice in their brave witness.

In the education of youth the Church has a twofold task. First, it must be eager to secure for every citizen the fullest possible opportunity for the development of the gifts that God has bestowed on him. In particular, the Church must condemn inequality of educational opportunity as a main obstacle to fullness of fellowship in the life of the community.

While the Church is thus concerned with all education it has, also, a special responsibility to realize its own understanding of the meaning and end of education in the relation of life to God. In education, as elsewhere, if God is not recognized, He is ignored. The Church must claim the liberty to give a Christian education to its own children. It is in the field of education that the conflict between Christian faith and non-Christian conceptions of the ends of life, between the Church and an all-embracing community life which claims to be the source and goal of every human activity, is in many parts of the world most acute. In this conflict all is at stake, and the Church must gird itself for the struggle.

As we look to the future it is our hope and prayer that the Spirit of God may cause new life to break forth spontaneously in a multitude of different centers, and that there may come into being a large number of "cells" of Christian men and women associated in small groups for the discovery of fresh ways in which they may serve God and their fellowmen.

We have deeply felt the absence from our fellowship of the churches that have not been represented at the Conference. Our hearts are filled with anguish as we remember the suffering of the Church in Russia. Our sympathy and gratitude go out to our Christian brethren in Germany; we are moved to a more living trust by their steadfast witness to Christ and we pray that we may be given grace to bear the same clear witness to the Lord.

Toward a New World Unity

We have much to encourage us since the Conference at Stockholm twelve years ago. The sense of the unity of the Church in all the world grows stronger every year. We trust that this cause will be yet more fully served by the World Council of Churches, proposals for which have been considered by the Conference and commended to the churches.

We have tried during these days at Oxford to look without illusion at the chaos and disintegration of the world, the injustices of the social order and the menace and horror of war. The world is anxious and bewildered and full of pain and fear. We are troubled yet we do not despair. Our hope is anchored in the living God. In Christ, and in the union of man

---

Nationalism is patriotism destroyed by sin; it is collective egotism that deceives the moral judgment and is expressed in the phrase, "My country, right or wrong." — **Francis Wei,** Shanghai, China.

with God and of man with man, which He creates, life even in face of all these evils has a meaning. In His Name we set our hands, as the servants of God and in Him of one another, to the task of proclaiming God's message of redemption, of living as His children and of combatting injustice, cruelty and hate. The Church can be of good cheer; it hears its Lord saying, "I have overcome the world."

The Results of Oxford

Although it is too soon to say what the effect of such a gathering of the Christians of the world may be in the life of the nations, certain things seem clear even at this early date.

First: the Conference laid the foundations for a World Council of Churches more definitely inclusive and representative than any world-wide body now in existence. It will form a kind of "general staff" for the work of the churches throughout the world. Nothing of such significance for Christian unity has happened in four hundred years!

Second: The Conference declared the full independence of the Church from states which attempt to limit or control its functions. This was indicated when the Conference stated: "Christians can acknowledge no ultimate authority but God." This and similar actions put the weight of the great churches of the world squarely behind the struggling Christians in lands where the very life of the Church is being crushed; the spiritual effects of this are immediate although what practical results may be expected no one can yet say.

Third: The non-Roman churches of the world took a clear stand in regard to the incompatibility of war with any ultimate realization of the ideals of Jesus in life. "War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in the world, and a defiance of God as revealed in Jesus Christ." Yet we cannot stop, said the Conference, with a negative attitude: It is the duty of Christians to promote justice and advance cooperation between the nations — pressing for the rights of the less fortunate whose despair has often led to war.

Fourth: Anti-Semitism and all other race hatred was clearly and specifically branded as unchristian. Three of the five Sections dealt with this issue and carefully outlined the many ways in which present wrong can be righted by an honest attempt to practice the ideals inseparable from a life that is bound up with Christ's life in the undivided human family.

Fifth: Economic justice was seen to be essential to **any** order of peace and fellowship. No one economic order was indicated as in itself Christian. To the fellowship of man with God and with each other as sons of God all economic wealth and every economic system should be subservient. The clear emphasis upon the Christian motive in all of life as over against the tendency of a secular Christianity to hallow the ordinary financial or social standards of success was marked. This is something which the Church as a world-wide body has not done previously.

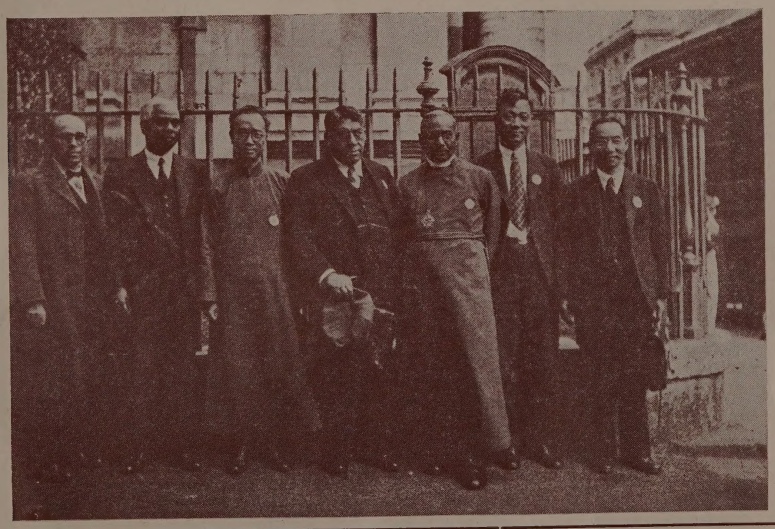
Sixth: In the field of the edu[illegible] the Church reasserted its right [illegible] increasing challenges from poli[illegible] forces. It defined in clear terms the essentials for freedom of thought and conscience in the realm of education. It indicated specifically the dangers in which civilization stands as a result of the tendency to suppress the truth in education because of the fear of freedom. "Seek ye the truth and the truth shall make you free" was seen to be a basic command of the Lord of the Church which his followers are compelled to obey at any cost — and particularly when training the mind of youth.

A group from the ends of the earth meet at Oxford:

Rev. Moura, Brazil

Dr. Lucas, South India

Dr. Wei, China



Rev. Velasco, Mexico

Bishop Azariah, India

Dr. Paik, Korea

Rev. Nishida, Japan

We came here thinking and talking about churches; we go away from here thinking and talking about the Church.—**Edgar DeWitt Jones,** Detroit, Michigan.

OXFORD AND EDINBURGH MEET IN LONDON

THE ECUMENICAL SERVICE IN ST. PAUL'S, LONDON

July 29th, 1937

THE slanting sunlight of late afternoon shines down on thronged sidewalks leading up to the knoll which is crowned by St. Paul's Cathedral in London. A great congregation quickly fills the nave and transepts while the great bells "ring the changes" overhead. And now a solemn procession moves from the left side of the square and enters the western portals. In three columns it converges on the central space under the glorious dome, there to await the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Dean of the Cathedral, and the four foreign churchmen who are to take leading parts in the liturgical service. The Dean returns to the West Door to receive the Lord Mayor of London and his staff, who, as representatives of the State, have come to pay their official respects to the greatest ecumenical service ever held. Already seated in the church is the English Prime Minister. In the assemblage are many of the outstanding church leaders of the world, as well as laymen distinguished in the fields of education, literature, and political economy.

Forty-five nations are represented; the ends of the earth are met together! Near the head of the procession, in Exile marches the Bishop of Tokyo; United Church of South India and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States as leaders of both the Northern and Southern Baptist Conventions, the Augustana Synod and the United Lutheran Church, the Methodists, the Disciples, the Friends, and the Old Catholic Communion are in the procession. Contrasted with Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew of Yenching University is Dean Brilioth of the University of Lund, in Sweden. The presence in the academic procession of such women as Mrs. Fred S. Bennett, Mrs. Harper Sibley, Mrs. Harrie R. Chamberlin, Dr. Eliza H. Kendrick, Prof. Georgia Harkness, and Miss Anna V. Rice indicates that women have moved forward in the ranks of the Church, even since the World Conference at Stockholm, in 1925.

The occasion for this gathering—whose unconscious pageantry will remain unforgettable to onlookers and participants alike—was the invitation extended by the Archbishop of Canterbury as head of the Church of England to the members and guests of the World Conference on Church, Community and State which had just been held at Oxford, and to the constituency of the World Conference on Faith and Order which would begin its sessions on August 3rd. The joint service was the symbol of the common concern of both these international Christian movements for the unity of the Church of Christ, of their common objective, which is to find the ways by which Christians of all kinds could work together, grow together, and ultimately achieve the reunion of Christendom in a Church whose witness and work should more nearly than ever before approximate the witness and work of its Lord and Founder. Presumptively the last meeting of the two movements as separate bodies, it was both a climax and a prophecy. It was a glorious ending to an epoch of slow development in Christian cooperation and an auspicious beginning of a new chapter in the history of Church unity.

Within, the scene was worthy of the significance of the service. Sunlight streaming in through the west windows fell on the richly colored robes and vestments and made the choir crossing look like a page from an illuminated missal. For seven hundred years Christian worship had been conducted on this historic spot, but probably never had a congregation so variegated—racially, geographically, and denominationally—met here before.

"And the Lord said unto Moses: 'SPEAK UNTO THE PEOPLE THAT THEY GO FORWARD.'" With this text from the Old Testament the Archbishop of Canterbury removed the last vestiges of that invisible barrier which has kept the Christian communions from following the road to the One Church pointed out by Jesus so long ago. It was a road they have long sought and which even now will have to be slowly and painstakingly built, ever keeping in sight the shining goal so clearly prophesied. Brief was the Archbishop's sermon; brief, and deeply moving. Was there a single man or woman in the vast audience that filled every inch of the mighty edifice who did not feel the presence of the Holy Spirit when the aged Primate, with all the joy and vigor of youth in his eyes, laid upon all the assemblage, and upon the churches and fellowships they represented, the solemn injunction: "to go forward."? Out of the pregnant silence which followed one might feel the collective answer: "Lord, I will!" Then the organ intoned the familiar hymn: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" and a flood of feeling was released as the vast throng rose to sing it, each in his own tongue.

There followed an Act of Invocation led by the Indian Bishop of Dornakal, an Act of Penitence led by Archbishop Eidem of Sweden, an Act of Intercession led by Dr. Cockburn of the Church of Scotland, and an Act of Adoration led by the Archbishop of Thyateira. The "Te Deum" sung in twelve different languages appropriately closed the service and soon the long procession wound its way out of the Cathedral into the soft summer twilight, while the bells clanged overhead in the immemorial manner of English bell-ringers and the last notes of the Recessional faded away within.

While on the one hand critical voices have been raised against the danger of impairing the sacerdotal heritage of the hierarchical churches by too intimate an association with the "non-Conformists" groups, other critics have spoken of these ecumenical meetings and services as "a long step towards Rome." To the former, reassurance will come with experience; to the latter one may well reply that this "long step" is rather one on the road toward the sources of the primitive Christian Church, to a spiritual Bethlehem, a rebirth of the Christian Churches as the Church of Christ.

It remains for each one of us who had any part in the World Conferences to spread out among pastors and parishes the news of the task now laid upon us:

"TO SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE THAT THEY GO FORWARD."